complaint have, for the past many years, been insistently heard in this Assembly. The final report of the committee for the revision of the curricula of studies in vernacular schools for boys has been received and it will be soon published in the Gazette.

43. Government have also issued final orders on the important subject of the curricula of studies for girls' schools. Under the new curricula now sanctioned, there will be eight compulsory subjects of instruction, *viz.*, language, arithmetic, nature study, needle-work, singing and games, which will be common to all classes, and geography and hygiene, which will be special to classes III and IV, in primary schools, besides two optional subjects, *viz.*, drawing and kindergarten. Provision will also be made, with effect from the next school year, for a separate course of study in subjects specially useful to women in His Highness the Maha Raja's High School for Girls.

44. Provision for imparting primary education to the illiterate convicts in the Central Prison was for the first time made in 1097, with the result that 112 casuals and 44 habituals have profited by such education till the end of Vrischikam, 1098. Inmates of the Reformatory School have also been permitted, under certain conditions, to learn a trade or an industry in some office or workshop outside that institution. A scheme for giving mofussil libraries the benefit of affiliation to the Trivandrum Public Library has been framed by the Honorary Secretary and submitted to Government with the opinions of the Library Committee and the Director of Public Instruction, and it is now engaging the attention of Government.

45. Efficiency.—The orders of the Government on the proposals of the Salaries Committee for improvement of salaries in the subordinate services have issued with a very few exceptions, and this opportunity has been availed of for reorganising and retrenching the staff of the various departments. The result is a net extra cost of Rs. 21,330½ per mensem, over and above the amount of scarcity allowance paid till then. All possible reductions consistent with efficiency have been effected and the figures appended below will show that the retrenchment knife did not spare the higher officers:—

Grade of staff.	Strength before reorganisation.	No. of hands reduced.	Percentage of reduction.	No. of hands newly appointed.
Gazetted staff ...	1,009	65	6·4	20
Executive subordinates ...	16,057	247	1·5	114
Ministerial staff ...	4,530	451	10	184
Menial staff ...	5,149	397	7·7	106
Total ...	26,745	1,160	4·3	424

It must be remembered that simultaneously with these reductions Government have had to create fresh departments and additional posts to meet the needs of a progressive administration, and the fact should not be lost sight of that, but for these new developments, the additional expenditure entailed by the improvement of salaries could have been kept much lower. Among the superior appointments abolished at the time of the reorganisation may be mentioned those of 1 Peishkar and 4 Tahsildars, 1 Deputy Conservator and 2 Assistant Conservators of Forests, 1 District Registrar, 1 Secretary and 1 Assistant Secretary to Government, the Vice-Principal, Training College, 2 Range Inspectors of Vernacular Schools, the State Geologist, 2 District Sanitary Officers, the Deputy Chief Engineer, 2 Executive Engineers and 4 Assistant Engineers. To avoid all possible hardship, none of the hands declared supernumerary were actually thrown out of service; they are being absorbed as vacancies occur in the several departments. As a parallel measure of relief, the emoluments of full-time servants paid from contingencies and of members of the work establishment of the Public

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Works Department were increased by the amounts of scarcity allowance till then drawn by them. The compilation of manuals, the prescription of departmental tests, the promulgation of rules relating to various important matters of administration, the more careful inspection of offices, and the more detailed scrutiny of periodical returns, are some of the means by which greater efficiency has been sought to be secured. A committee of officials and non-officials is being appointed to go into the present working of the Government Press and to suggest improvements therein, and Government are contemplating the creation of another competent committee to examine the condition of the P. W. D. Workshops.

46. **Finance.**—A perusal of Chapter II of the Administration Report for 1097 will enable you to see that the transactions of the year resulted in a deficit of Rs. 48,104. This deficit is smaller than that of 1096 and it is a matter for gratification that Travancore has been able to emerge with such small deficits out of a period of universal economic crisis of an unprecedented magnitude, in which almost every country in the world, including the various component parts of the Indian Empire, has had to budget for huge deficits. So far as retrenchment is concerned, I may point out that the State has, of late, been steadily extending its nation-building activities, and it would not be wise to circumscribe them now. Retrenchment at any price is not a sound financial policy and there is a limit beyond which it may well cease to be economical and may lead to undesirable results. Much work lies ahead for the State, in education, public works, medical relief, sanitation, agriculture, industries, and other spheres of moral and material development, and the aggregate expenditure of the State can only grow from year to year. The actual collections under the head of income-tax during 1097, the first year of the working of the Income-tax Regulation, amounted to Rs. 4,17,983, which is about Rs. 18,000 more than the estimated amount. The incidence of this tax per head of population was 3 chs. 5 cash, which is lower than the figure in Madras or Mysore. Arrangements could not be completed for assessing *quasi*-agricultural incomes during the last year, but they are in fair progress now and it is expected that they will increase to some extent the income-tax revenue of this year. It has, on the other hand, to be remembered that the abkari revenue of the State shows signs of steady decline, and that wind-falls are not a common feature of the finances of a non-industrial State like Travancore. That the only two ways of balancing a budget are increasing the revenues and retrenching the expenditure is a mere axiom. The only way by which Government can avoid the imposition of additional burdens on the general tax-payer to balance the budget is to make every possible effort to develop the normal sources of the State's revenue and to secure some financial relief by calling on local bodies to contribute a fair share of expenditure on local activities in the spheres of education, sanitation and public works. It is hoped that the fairness of this policy, which has already been enunciated in the Municipal Regulation and is being re-enunciated in the Village Panchayat Bill, will be more and more recognised and acquiesced in as days advance. The State Life Insurance Scheme was for the first time subjected to an actuarial valuation and the work was entrusted to Mr. M. R. Thambe of Bombay. His report shows that, although the lines on which the system was worked in the past call for improvement, the scheme itself has not resulted in any financial loss to Government. The benefits of the scheme which were confined to Government servants have recently been extended to municipal employés.

47. **Local Self-Government.**—The working of the Municipal Regulation, V of 1095, is in varying stages of progress in the several Municipalities of the State. While many Municipal Councils have courageously come forward to shoulder the new responsibilities which this legislative measure has thrown upon them, a few are fighting shy of taxation, and trying, if possible, to retrace some of the steps already travelled by them in that direction. The results achieved so far are, on the whole, not discouraging, and it is to be hoped that, in the near future, both the rate-payers and the non-official members who represent them on the several Municipal Councils will evince a progressive sense of readiness to bear civic responsibility and undergo some pecuniary sacrifice for its due discharge. The total

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